

## PRIDE.

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In the first place pride is inordinate self-esteem; an unreasonable conceit of one's own superiority in talents, beauty, wealth, accomplishments, rank or elevation in office, which manifests itself in lofty airs, distance, reserve and often in contempt of others. T. Dawes says *martial pride* looks down on industry. The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. In Proverbs 16 we learn that every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished. The wisest man on Bible record, Solomon, king of Israel, in an exhortation to fear God and believe his word 1000 years prior to the birth of King of Kings, said, "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." Franklin says, "Pride that dines on vanity sups on contempt." When king Nebuchadnezzar's dream was interpreted by Daniel saying, They shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling place shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. Wherefore, O King, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity. But the king puffed up with pride rejected this good council, thinking he was Lord of all he surveyed, and in twelve months he walked in the palace of Babylon.

In his pride the king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the Kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty? Pen cannot describe, nor tongue can tell the feeling of this man at that hour, he was in the zenith of his glory. He believed that he had grown and become so strong, that his greatness had reached unto heaven, and that he had dominion to the end of the earth. But alas! while the words were yet in his mouth and the thoughts in his heart, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The Kingdom is departed from thee. Now pride had to fall, he was made to eat grass with the oxen and be with the beasts of the field. In the same hour was the thing fulfilled upon the king, being driven from men and did eat grass as oxen and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, and his hairs were grown like eagle's feathers, and his nails like bird's claws.

Now when God had brought all this about and his understanding had returned unto him, and he had no more pride then he blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion. Now he says, I praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment; and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

Pride is inordinate and unreasonable self-esteem, attended with insolence and rude treatment of others. It is a high and unreasonable opinion that a poor little contracted soul entertains of itself. It manifests itself in self praise; adorning of the person, etc. To cultivate a proud spirit is exceedingly unreasonable. Seneca says, "If we could trace our descent we should find all slaves come from princes, and princes from slaves." To be proud in knowledge is to be blind in the light; to be proud of virtue is to poison ourselves with the antidote; to be proud of authority is to make our rise our downfall. Pride is sometimes confounded with dignity, when in reality there is but a slight resemblance between the two. Some men and women stand upon what they call dignity, when in fact it is nothing but pomposity. Poor mistaken souls, how meanly they appear in the eyes of intelligent people simply ridiculous. Pride is at the bottom of all such false dignity. There is a true dignity that some men have. It is not the dignity of office or position, but a right heart and a correct principle connected with humility and honesty. There is nothing that exhibits greater weakness in man than a false dignity. In the estimation of an intelligent man, it is a mere sham, a floating cloud without rain. Nearly all those overworked dignitaries are cold blooded, severe, uncharitable, unsociable, tyrannical, self-willed men. Pride with reciprocal pronoun is to indulge one's self with pride, to value one's self with their wealth, dress or equipage.

But I had not intended to write about dignity but pride, but as a false dignity is one of the developments worthy of a proud heart, I may be excused. I had intended to speak more particularly of pride, as it is seen in the church. And here is danger of a collision, but no matter, let it come, Pride is running the Church of Christ to-day; and if it is not soon arrested in some way or another, the angel of God may write upon the pulpit, Ichabod. It may be said that there is no sin in wearing fashionable apparel. This may be true under certain circumstances. It may not be a sin perhaps, to wear a fashionable coat, but when there is a disposition in

the heart to follow the various fashions as they come up, there is very good evidence to believe that the heart is not right. God says that we must not be conformed to this world, and if following the fashions and maxims of the world, is not conforming thereto, I know not how it is impossible to do so. Or where there is a desire to follow the fashions, without the means to do so, there is the conformity of the heart to the world. The spirit of pride is from the devil, and no mistake; and all who are proud at heart are of the devil. I know there are many apologies for fashion, both in and out of the pulpit; this, however, is no argument in favor of it, for the devil can get up an apology for every vice, no matter how wicked it may be. We have the Bible, and whatsoever conflicts with the letter and spirit of God's word, is sin. God's word most positively forbids the wearing of jewelry and costly apparel, but the devil says it is no sin. Who shall we believe, God or the devil?

Whose ivory sheath, inwrought with curious pride.

Adds graceful terror to the wearer's side.—Cope.

If we go into the church we will find every abominable fashion tolerated that is to be found anywhere. Who will deny this? And the preacher to whom the care of their souls is committed, is too much of a coward to rebuke it. And in some instances, he has no ground to go upon, for he is proud and stiff, as Satan wants him to be. Now, if this is not conforming to the world, then there is no such thing. Let the preacher ask his congregation for a collection for some benevolent cause, and they have but little to give. Why? They tell you that things are so high they cannot afford it. This is their plea. But it is false. Things are up to be sure, but many spend their money for fashion's sake, and thus they will let the cause of Christ suffer to gratify their wicked pride. Take the amount of money spent by members of the church in America annually, for rings, breast pins, earrings, feathers, perfumery, powder, artificials, etc., and it would support a thousand missionaries in foreign fields. But what is the use, the people will do as they please anyhow, and I will only get enemies by meddling with it. I presume that I had better not interfere with it; but listen just a moment. The end is coming. The judgment of the last day is near at hand. God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil. Prepare to meet thy God. Hark! the trumpet is sounding and the dead are stirring in their graves, the sea is rolling its millions to the shore; the living are being changed, the sun is folding up its light,